



Satellite image with enhanced low cloud-top temperatures (degrees C) for 7:15 a.m. EDT (NOAA)

### **Agricultural Weather Highlights - Tuesday - December 31, 2002**

- ***In the West***, stormy weather continues from ***northern California to the northern Rockies***, bringing additional drought relief to winter grains and further improvement in high-elevation snow packs. Unfavorable dryness persists, however, across much of the ***Intermountain West***, including the ***central Rockies***.
- ***On the Plains***, mild, dry weather favors overwintering wheat across ***southern portions of the region***. Meanwhile, winter wheat remains exposed to potential weather extremes on the drought-affected ***northern and central High Plains***, although atmospheric patterns associated with El Niño do not typically favor sustained periods of bitterly cold weather in this region.
- ***In the Corn Belt***, rainy weather from the ***Ohio Valley to the lower Great Lakes region*** contrasts with persistently dry weather in the ***upper Midwest***. Precipitation last fell in early November across parts of the ***western Corn Belt***, allowing producers to complete an unusual amount of off-season fieldwork.
- ***In the South***, locally heavy showers and thunderstorms are sweeping across areas ***east of the Delta***, maintaining wet field conditions. Dry weather is returning to the ***western Gulf Coast region***, where Monday's heavy showers and thunderstorms caused localized flooding and wind damage.

**Outlook:** A squall line will move quickly across the ***eastern Gulf Coast States*** today, while widespread rain will reach the ***Southeast***. By New Year's Day, a large area of precipitation will spread into the ***Mid-Atlantic States***, with freezing rain and snow possible in parts of the ***Northeast***. Meanwhile, significant snow is possible in the ***central and eastern Corn Belt***. Farther west, periods of rain and snow will continue across the ***Pacific Northwest and northern California***. The NWS 6-10 day outlook for January 5-9, 2003, calls for above-normal precipitation in the ***Pacific Northwest***, but mostly dry weather in the ***East*** and the ***Southwest***. Above-normal temperatures are expected ***west of the Mississippi River and north of the Ohio River***, while colder-than-normal weather will be limited to the ***southern Atlantic region***.

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